

# LIFELINES

of



## LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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### Business or Family?

I recently experienced a good deal of anxiety over a regrettable conflict of interest. In October, I discovered I had leaking pipes under my house which caused my foundation to heave. As you can probably guess, fixing it wasn't cheap! It cost thousands of dollars we hadn't planned on spending and we had to quickly secure a high-interest loan in order to cover the bill. Around the same time, a neighbor told me of a similar problem she had and how her insurance covered most of the expenses. I was hopeful my insurance would also help defray some of the cost, but that was not the case. Despite the mention of foundation damage in my policy, I was told (over the phone and without any inspection) that my policy did not cover this particular kind of foundation damage. Fair enough; the policy was misleading, but technically they were correct and I should have read the fine print. The whole experience caused me to reconsider my insurance company and how much I was paying for what I was getting. And here is where the conflict arose.

First, I am a creature of habit. I used the same insurance company for more than 20 years. I got a "loyal customer" discount and didn't want to change. (I hate the thought of being "disloyal.") But the real conflict set in because of my insurance agent. You see, he is not just a good guy, but a really good guy. Whenever I needed help with some insurance issue he was competent and able to handle it. I also enjoyed visiting with him about all kinds of things. He is a sincere Christian and would ask about Lord of Life and often he would inquire about some theological matter. I consider him a friend and I liked doing business with him. But here's the problem: upon researching other insurance companies, I discovered I could save over \$200 a month—something badly needed in light of our recent plumbing expenses.

So, what do I do? On the one hand I want to help and support a friend; on the other, I don't buy insurance to make friends, I buy it to protect me in the event of large unforeseen expenses—something the insurance company had just failed to do. I anguished over the decision but ultimately chose to switch companies and save the money because while I appreciate my friend, buying insurance is ultimately a business transaction.

Why am I bringing this up? Because I want you to consider the difference between business and friends, or even better, business and family.

When it comes to our family and friends, we are committed to them and willing to sacrifice time and money for their support. When our child or grandparent or spouse needs something, we don't ask *what's the cheapest I can get away with*, but rather, *what's the best way I can help*. We also don't abandon our family and friends the minute they disappoint us or some conflict arises. On the contrary, we bear with each other for the sake of the family or the friendship and we strive to work things out for the good of the family. Over and over again we forgive and help and encourage and sacrifice for the sake of our family and friends. But this is not how most of us conduct business.

When it comes to business, we are consumers of products. We want the best deal and we will shop around for the lowest price. We may also have a certain amount of suspicion about businesses because

some do not have our best interest in mind and will tell us anything to make money –*caveat emptor* – buyer beware! So, if a business does not provide you what you want, you take your business elsewhere. That's the consumer mentality and the nature of a business relationship.

But why am I *really* bringing this up? Because I want you to ask yourself: What is my relationship with my church? Is it more like a business, or a family?

If you approach the church with the mentality of a family, then you will bear with your church and the members of the congregation even when they do things that you prefer they would not. You will help and sacrifice and work for the sake of the people in the congregation and the mission of the Church. Your desire is for every person at the church and the church itself to do well and succeed and you gladly play your role in it. On the other hand, those who treat the church like a business expect things to be done according to their liking and when they are not, they will shop around and find another church to give them what they want. They approach the church with a consumer mentality.

Which is the correct approach? Should we go through churches like we do insurance companies, restaurants, contractors, and clothing stores? Or, should we abide with our church and stay committed to it even when things are difficult, like we all do with our family and friends? Do we see the church as something that exists solely to serve us? (like a business) or, do we see it as something we are called to serve? (like our families and loved ones.) Does Scripture offer any guidance?

Consider these words from the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter of 1<sup>st</sup> John: "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. ... <sup>2</sup> Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is." The Bible repeatedly speaks in familial terms. For example, we are the "children of God" and God is our "Father" who is in heaven. Fellow Christians are our "brothers and sisters" and on account of Christ our brother, (Heb. 2:11) we are all fellow heirs of the kingdom. This language ought to impress on us the correct nature of the relationship: the Church is not a business, it is your family.

Your brother in Christ,

PrS



## Lent:

This year's Lenten services will be based off a sermon series by Thomas Egger of Concordia Seminary called: *O Love: How Deep, How Broad, How High*

**Ash Wednesday** is February 17<sup>th</sup>. We will have two services at 1:00 PM and 7:00 PM.

**Lenten Midweek Services** will be on Wednesdays at 7:00 and they will be live streamed. \*\*\**Offerings from these services will go to Lord of Life's scholarship fund.*

**Masked only services:** are offered on the first Sunday of each month at 12:30 PM

**Sunday mornings:** Beginning February 21<sup>st</sup> services will be at 8:00 and 10:45 with Bible Study and Sunday school at 9:30 AM

The topic for Bible class will be the Gospel of Mark. (We are hoping to live stream the class.)

## The Mutual Conversation and Consolation of Brethren

Martin Luther listed "the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren" as one of the means of sharing the Gospel and God's grace in the Smalcald Articles. The scriptures describe the Christian community as "the fellowship" (Acts 2:42), the "body of Christ" (Romans 1:25 & 1 Corinthians 12:27), "members of the household of God" (Ephesians 2:19), and "the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). It's clear from these that, in a very real sense, we as the church are to be a family of believers - supporting one another in the faith and in our daily needs - just as the members of a family support one another.

In the last 10 months, even for those of us who have continued to attend Sunday worship - and especially for those who have by necessity switched to virtual attendance by video - our ability to gather together and support one another as a community of faith has been impacted by COVID and the precautionary measures implemented to slow its spread. I've recently been reading the book *Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer which he wrote during another period in history when the ability for believers to gather in a community of faith was disrupted by outside influences - specifically, while he was involved in an underground seminary due to persecution by the Nazi regime.

In this book, he addresses the importance of community in the life of the church and of the Christian. I share the following excerpts with you in the hope that you find them as pertinent and as moving as I did.

*It is not simply to be taken for granted that the Christian has the privilege of living among other Christians.*

*So between the death of Christ and the Last Day it is only by a gracious anticipation of the last things that Christians are privileged to live in visible fellowship with other Christians. It is by the grace of God that a congregation is permitted to gather visibly in this world to share God's Word and sacrament. Not all Christians receive this blessing.*

*The physical presence of other Christians is a source of incomparable joy and strength to the believer.*

*The prisoner, the sick person, the Christian in exile sees in the companionship of a fellow Christian a physical sign of the gracious*

*presence of the triune God. Visitor and visited in loneliness recognize in each other the Christ who is present in the body; they receive and meet each other as one meets the Lord, in reverence, humility, and joy. They receive each other's benedictions as the benediction of the Lord Jesus Christ. But if there is so much blessing and joy even in a single encounter of brother with brother, how inexhaustible are the riches that open up for those who by God's will are privileged to live in the daily fellowship of life with other Christians!*

*It is easily forgotten that the fellowship of Christian brethren is a gift of grace, a gift of the Kingdom of God that any day may be taken from us, that the time that still separates us from utter loneliness may be brief indeed. Therefore, let him who until now has had the privilege of living a common Christian life with other Christians praise God's grace from the bottom of his heart. Let him thank God on his knees and declare: It is grace, nothing but grace, that we are allowed to live in community with Christian brethren.*

*The Christian lives wholly by the truth of God's Word in Jesus Christ. If somebody asks him, Where is your salvation, your righteousness? he can never point to himself. He points to the Word of God in Jesus Christ, which assures him salvation and righteousness.*

*But God has put this Word into the mouth of men in order that it may be communicated to other men. When one person is struck by the Word, he speaks it to others. God has willed that we should seek him and find his living Word in the witness of a brother, in the mouth of a man. Therefore, a Christian needs another Christian who speaks God's Word to him. He needs him again and again when he becomes uncertain and discouraged, for by himself he cannot help himself without belying the truth. He needs his brother man as a bearer and proclaimer of the divine word of salvation.*

*And that also clarifies the goal of all Christian community: they meet one another as bringers of the message of salvation. As such, God permits them to meet together and gives them community. Their fellowship is founded solely upon Jesus Christ*



*Our community with one another consists solely in what Christ has done to both of us.*

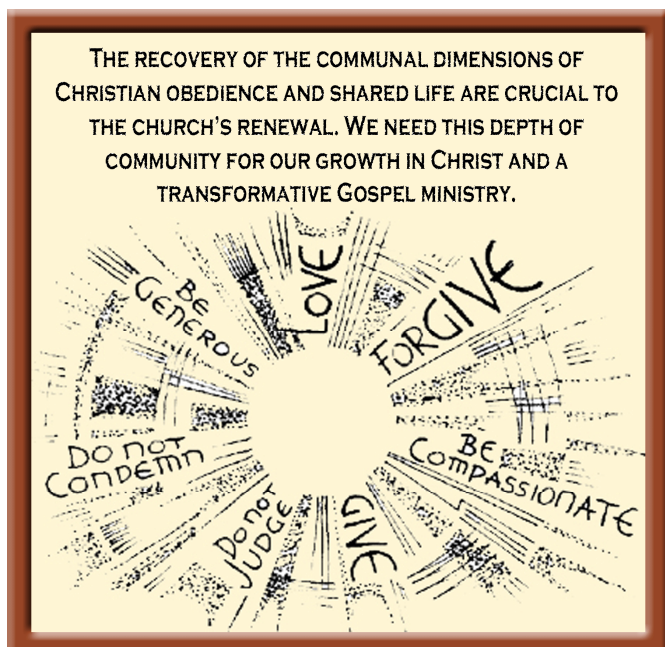
*I have community with others and I shall continue to have it only through Jesus Christ. The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and his work become the one and only thing that is vital between us. We have one another only through Christ, but through Christ we do have one another, wholly, and for all eternity.*

*In Christian brotherhood everything depends upon its being clear right from the beginning, first, that Christian brotherhood is not an ideal, but a divine reality. Second, that Christian brotherhood is a spiritual and not a psychic reality.*

*Christian brotherhood is not an ideal which we must realize; it is rather a reality created by God in Christ in which we may participate.*

My brothers and sisters in Christ at Lord of Life, I pray that even if our normal community bonds continue to be disrupted for a brief period, we may all be reminded that it is Christ that we share in common - and it is the promises we all have in Christ that we are to share with one another always - in words and in support and in love - whether we are physically gathered in worship or not.

In Christ,  
Mike Kunschke



## Carl Flentge Schalk

Carl Flentge Schalk passed away on Sunday, January 24, at the age of 91. The Lutheran church music community lost a composer, educator, professor, and mentor.

If you don't recognize his name, you may be familiar with some of his hymn tunes. In our Lutheran Service Book, he is credited with four hymn tunes. These include Thine (LSB 680 - Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise), Now (LSB 910 Now the Silence), Manger Song (LSB 369 -Where Shepherds Lately Knelt), and Fortunatus New (LSB 454 - Sing My Tongue, the Glorious Battle, and LSB 521 – Christ, the Lord of Hosts, Unshaken). He also arranged new settings for other existing tunes, composed an abundance of choral works, and wrote books on various aspects of Lutheran church music and hymnody. He was a professor at Concordia University Chicago from 1965 to 1994, and while there influenced the school's creation of the Master of Church Music degree.

Dr. John Behnke wrote in the foreword of Carl F. Schalk: A Life in Song, "Carl Schalk is one of the top, if not the top, authorities on the theology and practice of Lutheran church music...Carl Schalk believes that the Church's song should tell the story of salvation, proclaim Law and Gospel, and be sung by all of God's people."

Thanks be to God for his life and wealth of knowledge shared in so many ways.

Victoria Frinsko

# Teen Times

It's been nearly a year since the COVID-19 pandemic started taking a hold on our country, our community, and ultimately our church. The last ten months have been quite a roller coaster ride for a great many people. Quite frankly, it has changed the identity of our nation as a whole, the social aspect of our local communities, and the way in which ministry is carried out within our own congregation. Churches have turned to online tools more than ever to stay in touch with their members and have had to develop creative ways to spread the Gospel. Even on a personal level, people have had to adapt while isolated in self-quarantine, or are prohibited in seeing family and friends due to pandemic restrictions. As a result, our society has turned to online meetings and social media to satisfy the need for human interaction; hence a new personal identity could be fashioned through the internet. What about our identity as Christians?

To address that, the IMPACT youth group will begin a new Bible study on February 21, the Sunday we return to normal worship and Bible class times. It is called ***Your Unshakable Identity in Christ*** and will focus some well-known and not-so-well-known people in the Bible whose identity was shaped by the way that God worked through them. Until then, you might want to ask yourself; what are the things that shape my identity? You may be surprised as to how many things do. Just make sure that one of the items is your faith in Jesus as your Savior!

Until next time, God bless!

Scott Peters



Lutheran Women's Missionary League  
invites you to the  
**39<sup>th</sup> Biennial Convention**  
Thursday, June 24–Sunday, June 27, 2021  
Rupp Arena at Central Bank Center • Lexington, Kentucky



## Running the Race ... Looking to Jesus

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:1–2).*

## Convention Goal

Looking to Jesus, we run the race set before us and proclaim the joy of the Lord.

## Convention Objectives

Convention attendees will:

- Focus on Jesus through God's Word and Sacrament.
- Joyfully celebrate our salvation with song and prayer.
- Serve our neighbors through witness and mission.

## Convention Logo Explanation



The convention logo incorporates the shape of the last letter of the Greek alphabet, Omega, and makes reference to the passage from Scripture, *"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end"* (Revelation 22:13). The symbol is shaped like a horseshoe, which is appropriate, as horses are a large part of the Kentucky culture.

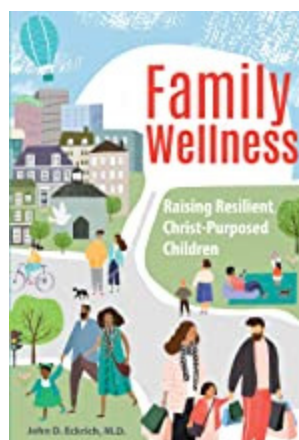
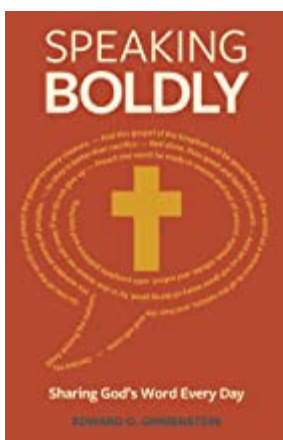
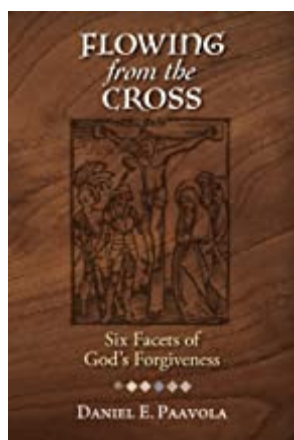


Ancient Greeks awarded horseshoe-shaped laurel wreaths to victors of competitions. In our logo, the laurel wreath symbolizes our victory in Christ.



The banner was a method of announcing an official proclamation. Our banner proclaims that we are *"Running the Race ... Looking to Jesus."*

## New additions to the library:



*Flowing From the Cross: Six facets of Forgiveness* by Daniel Paavola

*Speaking Boldly: Sharing God's Word Every Day* by Edward Grimenstein

*Family Wellness: Raising Resilient, Christ-Purposed Children* by John D. Eckrich, MD

## About the Library:

New volumes continue to be added. When new popular books are released by Concordia Publishing House, we try and purchase them both to support the writing of good books and also to encourage members of our congregation to read. If you see anything in the CPH catalogue or website ([www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org)) that interests you, check the library to see if we have it already or just ask Pastor Shaltan. If it isn't there already, your interest in it may prompt us to purchase a copy for the library.



A huge thank you to the Altar Guild members, Charis Bennett, Nancy Cawood, Laurie George, Kathy Hite, Beverly Moudy, Caitlyn Moudy, Nelda Schrank, and Nevelle Vess, for the giving of their time and effort to assist with the many worship services held for the year 2020. No matter what 2020 brought to the table for everyone, these ladies were always willing to do whatever was needed and beyond. They are a blessing to the Altar Guild and Lord of Life.

To Scott Peters, another blessing to Lord of Life, a huge thank you for all he has done for the Altar Guild, like the hanging of the banners for the various seasons of the church year. He exhibits his talents and expertise to help make tasks much easier for the members of the guild prepare for worship services. One perfect task he has done was the needed reconstruction of the banner storage in the area behind the altar. The professionally designed project was well planned and built to perfection. This labor of love was highly appreciated. Thank you, Scott.

Lynda Abbott  
Altar Guild Chairman



## Lord of Life Small Groups

### EMPTY NESTERS' CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike and Sandra Paradise at (972) 424-2951 or [itsparadise.inplano@verizon.net](mailto:itsparadise.inplano@verizon.net)
- † Usually meet one Sat. a month at 2:30 PM

### EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth [BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com](mailto:BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com)
- † Usually meet one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

### FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or [speters@planolutheran.com](mailto:speters@planolutheran.com)
- † Usually meet one Sun. a month at 5:30 PM

### GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Chris Oltmann at (972) 727-6330 or Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Usually meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sat. of each month at 6:30 PM for Bible study

### MIXED BLESSINGS

- † For info `contact Fred and Ruth Bernhardt at (972) 398-0771
- † Usually meet one Sat. a month at 6:30 PM

### TWENTY SOMETHINGS

- † For couples and singles in their twenties
- † For info contact Pastor Shaltanis at [PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com](mailto:PastorShaltanis@yahoo.com)
- † The group is currently in transition, but has usually met on Sundays after late service



## FEBRUARY



## BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

- 1 Bette Martin
- 3 Julz Cruz
- 4 Cheryl Scaglione
- 5 Rebecca Armstrong
- 6 Sal Cruz
- 6 Dee Peters
- 6 Tom Womack
- 8 Marty Buckmeier
- 8 Vi Krohn
- 10 Stephen Dillard
- 11 Wayne Massie
- 13 Stephen Belcher
- 13 Ben Heffner
- 14 Tom & Karen Ashburn [56]
- 14 Gary & Bonnie Holtzman [45]
- 14 Jerry & Winona Parish [15]
- 18 Amy Reinert
- 19 Paul Grabow
- 19 Charles Hacker
- 19 Rebecca Short
- 20 Catharine Borck
- 20 Reuben Martin
- 23 Sarah Loewecke
- 25 Jackie Barnes
- 25 Madeline Prescott
- 27 Ernie Gromatzky
- 27 Bailey Lund



**DEADLINE FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES IS THE 20th — [lol.newsletter.editor@gmail.com](mailto:lol.newsletter.editor@gmail.com)**